

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Revise the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A fastening device, comprising:

a first component member including a plurality of threads of a female screw formed on an inner peripheral wall of said first component member and each of said threads of the first component member having a predetermined lead angle; and

a second component member having an open end portion and including a plurality of threads of a male screw formed on an outer peripheral wall of said open end portion so as to engage with the threads of said first component member, at least one of the threads of said second component member extending along its length at a first lead angle and at least one of the threads of said second component member uniformly extending along its length at a second lead angle such that the length extending at the second lead angle is free of any portion extending therefrom at an angle different from the second lead angle, the first and second lead angles being different and the first lead angle being the same as the predetermined lead angle of the threads of the first component member,

said first and second component members being formed of an elastic material,

wherein when said first and second component members are moved closer from a first relative position to a second relative position, one of the threads of the female screw initially slides against a thread of the male screw having the second lead angle to result in the first and second component members engaging each other, and when said threads of the first and second component members engage, said threads are elastically deformed by each other by moving said threads at a distance, and said first and second component members are fixed in the second

position while maintaining their engaged relationship by the frictional engagement of the threads differing in said lead angle.

2-5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein each of said first and second component members includes an even number of threads.

7. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein when the threads on the inner wall of said first component member are engaged with the threads formed at the open end portion of said second component member, the inner ceiling surface of said first component member is brought into contact with the surface of said open end portion of said second component member defining the opening.

8-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said first component member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said second component member is from about 1° to about 2°.

12. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said first component member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said second component member is at least about 1°.

13. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said first component member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said second component member is less than about 2°.

14. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said first component member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said second component member is about 1.5°.

15-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) A method of fastening a first component member serving as a lid and a second component member serving as a cylindrical container having an open end portion, said first component member being a lid for said open end portion, said first component member including an even number of threads of a female screw formed on an inner peripheral wall of said lid and each of the threads of the first component member having a predetermined

lead angle, and said second component member including an even number of threads of a male screw formed on an outer peripheral wall of said open end portion so as to engage with the threads of said first component member and at least one of the threads of said second component member extending along its length at a first lead angle and at least one of the threads of said second component member extending along its length at a second lead angle, the first and second lead angles being different and the first lead angle being the same as the predetermined lead angle of the threads of the first component member,

said first and second component members being formed of an elastic material, the fastening method comprising the steps of:

moving said first and second component members to a first relative position where one of the threads of the female screw initially slides against a thread of the male screw having the second lead angle to result in the component members engaging each other; and

moving said first and second component members from the first relative position to a second relative position so that said threads are elastically deformed when they engage with each other,

whereby said first and second component members are fastened to each other by the frictional engagement of said threads.

22. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 6, wherein threads of the second component member that extend at the first lead angle alternate within the second component member with threads that extend at the second lead angle.

23. (Previously Presented) A method of fastening a first component member serving as a lid and a second component member serving as a cylindrical container having an open end portion, said first component member being a lid for said open end portion, said first component member including an even number of threads of a female screw formed on an inner peripheral wall of said lid and at least one of the threads of said first component member extending along its length at a first lead angle and at least one of the threads of said first component member extending along its length at a second lead angle, the first and second lead angles being different, and said second component member including an even number of threads of a male screw formed on an outer peripheral wall of said open end portion so as to engage with the threads of said first component member and each of the threads of the second component member having a predetermined lead angle that is the same as the first lead angle of said at least one of the threads of said first component member,

said first and second component members being formed of an elastic material, the fastening method comprising the steps of:

moving said first and second component members to a first relative position where one of the threads of the female screw initially slides against a thread of the male screw having the second lead angle to result in the component members engaging each other; and

moving said first and second component members from the first relative position to a second relative position so that said threads are elastically deformed when they engage with each other,

whereby said first and second component members are fastened to each other by the frictional engagement of said threads.

24. (Currently Amended) A fastening device, comprising:

a first component member, including a plurality of threads of a female screw formed on an inner peripheral wall of said first component member, at least one of the threads of said first component member uniformly extending along its length at a first lead angle and at least one of the threads of said first component member extending along its length at a second lead angle such that the length extending at the second lead angle is free of any portion extending therefrom at an angle different from the second lead angle, the first and second lead angles being different; and

a second component member having an open end portion and including a plurality of threads of a male screw formed on an outer peripheral wall of said open end portion so as to engage with the threads of said first component member, and each of said threads of said second component member having a predetermined lead angle that is the same as the first lead angle of said at least one of the threads of said first component member,

said first and second component members being formed of an elastic material,

wherein when said first and second component members are moved closer from a first relative position to a second relative position, one of the threads of the female screw initially slides against a thread of the male screw having the second lead angle to result in the first and second component members engaging with each other, and when said threads of the first and second component members engage, said threads are elastically deformed by each other by moving said threads at a distance, and said first and second component members are fixed in the second position while maintaining their engaged relationship by the frictional engagement of the threads differing in said lead angle.

25. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 24, wherein each of said first and second component members includes an even number of threads.

26. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 24, wherein when the threads on the inner wall of said first component member are engaged with the threads formed at the open end portion of said second component member, the inner ceiling surface of said first component member is brought into contact with the surface of said open end portion of said second component member defining the opening.

27. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 24, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said second component member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said first component member is from about 1° to about 2°.

28. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 24, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said second component member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said first component member is at least about 1°.

29. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 24, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said second component

member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said first component member is less than about  $2^{\circ}$ .

30. (Previously Presented) The fastening device according to claim 24, wherein the difference between the predetermined lead angle of the threads of said second component member and the second lead angle of the at least one of the threads of said first component member is about  $1.5^{\circ}$ .

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Cancelled)

33. (New) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein the length of the thread of the second component member extending at the second lead angle is substantially equal to the length of said one of the threads of the second component member extending at the first lead angle.

34. (New) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein the second component member defines a surface defining its open end portion, and the thread of the second component member extending at the second lead angle and said one of the threads of the second component member extending at the first lead angle are substantially equally spaced from said surface.



35. (New) The fastening device according to claim 1, wherein every other thread of the plurality of threads of the second component member extends at a lead angle which is different than the lead angle associated with its adjacent thread.